



Fig. 6.64. Hagiographical icon of St. Sergiy of Radonezh. In the bottom part of the icon we see “the battle against Mamai”. Taken from [142], page 130.



Fig. 6.65. Old icon called “The Tale of the Battle against Mamai” that depicts the Battle of Kulikovo (left part of the icon). Many of the details that we see in this icon confirm our hypothesis that the Battle of Kulikovo really took place at Kulishki, Moscow, and that both armies had been Russian, the hostile “Tartar forces” being purely figmental. The icon is dated to the middle of the XVII century. The artwork gradually became obscured by the darkened layer of drying oil; it was only uncovered in 1959. Taken from [996], pages 136-137.

ered by a layer of drying oil, which would eventually darken, becoming almost completely black in some 100 years. Therefore, new images were drawn on top of the blackened icons; often marginally different from the original, and at times completely different. This process could take place several times. The XX

century chemical science allows the removal of newer layers and the restoration of the older ones; this means that the Yaroslavl icon in its modern, “uncovered” state had not been visible in the XVIII-XIX century. The top layer must have had nothing in common with the battle scene in question, which was uncov-



Fig. 6.66. “The Tale of the Battle against Mamai”. Right part of the icon. Taken from [996], pages 136-137.

ered in 1959 ([996], pages 136-137). This rare painting has thus managed to escape the attention of historians. We are using a close-in of a fragment of the icon from [996] (pages 136-137). One might well enquire about the modern fate of this icon, as a matter of fact.

What does one see on the icon? Many interesting things – firstly, the faces of the Tartars are all Caucasian, and don’t differ from the faces of the Russian

soldiers – both armies look completely the same. The Russian army of Dmitriy Donskoi is on the left, and the “Tartar” army of Mamai is on the right. The most noteworthy detail is the fact that Mamai’s soldiers are crossing a river in order to reach the Kulikovo Field, descending the steep slope of a tall hill as they approach the river. One can see this plainly enough in fig. 6.66 – everything is in perfect concurrence with our reconstruction. Indeed, the troops of Mamai,